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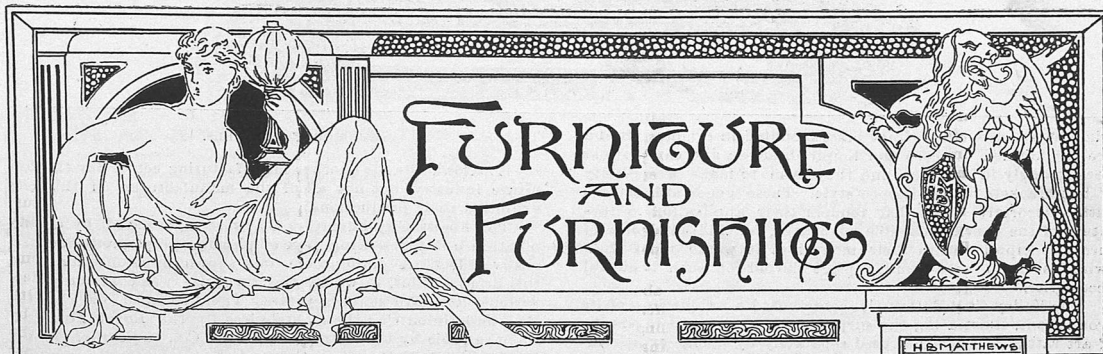
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THE WESTERN FURNITURE EXHIBIT AT THE COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION.

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.



THE Grand Rapids furniture manufacturers made a collective exhibit of their various productions at the Exposition, occupying a series of neatly decorated interiors, each showing three wall spaces, in which the vari-

ous displays of furniture was exhibited.

The Gunn Folding Bed Co. exhibited a gorgeous combination folding bed, valued at \$2,500, which was specially designed and executed for the Exposition. The combination consisted of a sliding wardrobe, with mirror and a writing desk attachment, the whole being constructed of the finest mahogany, with gilt trimmings.

The Gunn bed is the latest development of American ingenuity in combination beds, and one that it seems impossible to improve upon. The New York agents are Messrs. De Graaf & Taylor of Nos. 47 and 49 West 14th street, who carry a full line of the Gunn folding beds. Some are combinations of bed, bookcase and writing desk, and others sideboard and bed in cherry, mahogany and oak, the price ranging from \$73.50 to \$133.00.

The Widdicomb Furniture Co. exhibited an elegant bed-room suite in bird's-eye maple, decorated with choice carvings.

The William A. Berkey Furniture Co. astonished visitors by their very attractive line of fancy furniture, including china cabinet, bookcase, two secretaries, ladies' writing desk, and carved buffet, in mahogany and curly birch. The work exhibited great ingenuity and adaptation to the wants of the purchaser. The forms were delicate and pleasing, yet substantial in execution.

The Welsh Folding Bed Co. exhibited two elaborate fold-

ing beds, designed not merely for convenience as beds, but for parlor decoration as well. There were mirrors and shelves for vases, etc., the facades of the pieces being sufficient to contribute an air of elegance to any apartment in which they may be placed.

The Stickley Bros. Co., who are manufacturers of chairs, exhibited a line of hall and Roman chairs in white mahogany and oak, some being on Jacobean lines, which were extremely pleasing, and designed to illustrate the fashion of the moment in hall seats.

The Royal Furniture Co. exhibited a dining-room suite in

mahogany, on severely classic lines—that is in the Greek style. The table was supported on Doric columns, and the lines characterizing the sideboard and buffet, as well as the chairs, betrayed the austere spirit of early Greek forms, adapted to modern furniture. The room was decorated somewhat in the spirit of the Italian Renaissance, the carpet being a deep Nile green velvet.

The Grand Ledge Chair Co. were represented by several chairs and rockers in bird's-eye maple.

The Sligh Furniture Co. charmed many admirers with a bedroom suite, including a cheval dresser and washstand, produced on lines that make the furniture of these manufacturers extremely popular.

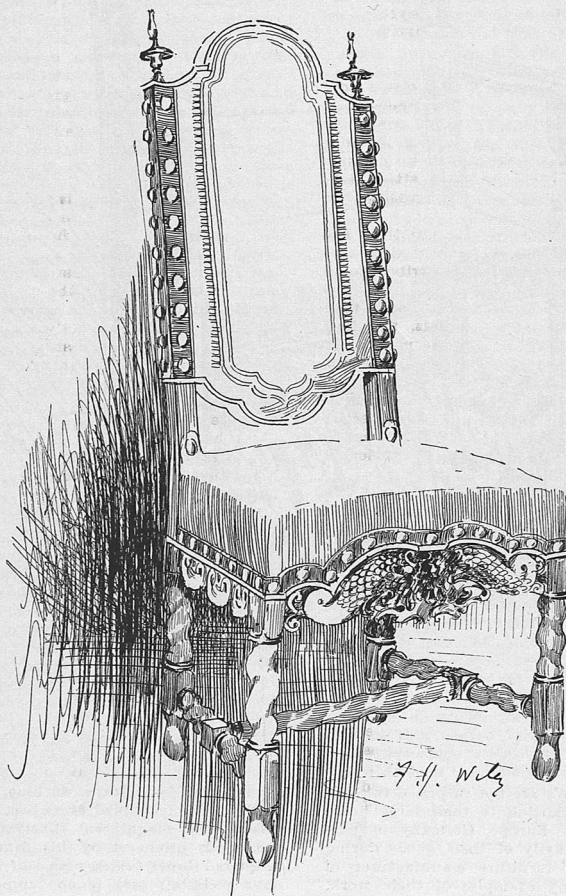
The Grand Rapids Chair Co. exhibited a collection of chairs in oak and mahogany. There were some very handsome dining chairs, and with these there was a double deck five o'clock tea table, library table, bookcase and settee.

The Sweet Furniture Co. surprised the unsophisticated by a folding bed which opened in the center, the bed coming down in front. It was another illustration of the many devices adapted by manufacturers of combination furniture.

The New England Furniture Co. toyed with the affections of thousands with their "Baby Ruth" white enamel and gilt bedroom suite, in the Empire style, which for solid utility and dainty effect would favorably

compare with any similar furniture in the Exposition.

The Grand Rapids Brass Co. elevated the art of metallic appliqué in an extensive collection of their metal furniture



SPANISH CHAIR. DESIGNED BY F. J. WILEY.

trimmings in the form of art brass mounted in ormolu gilt and fire gilt finishes. Rococo and Empire brackets and candlesticks were strongly in evidence, and they seem to make a specialty of hat brackets in the Rococo style. These goods are inspired with a decorative effect that renders their application to furniture of the greatest possible advantage, for indeed a piece of furniture supplied with their mountings is worth more than twice as much as a similar piece devoid of such beautiful accessories.

The Valley City Rattan Co. contributed a unique line of its productions, illustrating the surprising dexterity and ingenuity of art rattan work, either used separately by itself, or in combination with hardwood in the form of rockers, easy chairs, basket rockers, etc. The goods were treated to a sixteenth century finish that lent dignity to the airy character of the rattan work.

Nelson, Matter & Co. are to be congratulated upon the style, beauty and finish of their hand carved mahogany bedroom suite exhibited, consisting of a bed, dressing table, chiffonier, settee, round table and chairs.

Scattered throughout several of the exhibits were examples of the Goshen carpet sweeper, which is also a well known Grand Rapids firm. The styles in sweepers follow those in furniture, and change every six months. For exhibition purposes, on Chicago day the firm manufactured three special sweepers, decorated in red, white and blue enamel. Their large hotel sweeper was adopted by the Exposition authorities for sweeping out the buildings. It is three feet in length, and is made of oak.

The Grand Rapids exhibit, as a whole, was characterized by economy in the use of materials, great expertness of design and finish, and a characteristic devotion to the demands of the market and of the customer. The furniture was economic and artistic, rather than majestic or magnificent, and betrayed sound judgment in design and execution. We are not surprised to learn that the Grand Rapids firms, in addition to their large home trade, ship goods very largely to Europe, Germany in particular having purchased very heavily of their goods during the Exposition. Parisian firms and furniture manufacturers of Glasgow also bought a great many examples of their work, which was evidently intended for European reproduction.

There are in Grand Rapids no less than sixty-two factories, having an aggregate capital of \$8,500,000. Nine thousand men are employed in the Grand Rapids furniture industry, which makes it one of the most important furniture manufacturing centers in the United States.

ROCKFORD, ILLS.

Rockford, Ills., is another manufacturing center for the furniture industry, but not all of the manufacturers of this city exhibited their productions.

The Forest City Furniture Co. were represented by a combination bed and writing desk of pleasing proportions and decorative effect. A dining-room was shown in connection with this firm's exhibit, in which the furniture was contributed by various Rockford manufacturers. The sideboard was by the Rockford Union Co., the mantel piece by the Royal Furniture Co., the table by the Scandia Furniture Co., the corner cabinet by the Standard Furniture Co., and the chairs and divan by the Illinois Furniture Co. The style of the furniture throughout

was Romanesque, executed in mahogany. The dinner table was decorated with a dinner service, in which everything but the viands was provided. The corner cabinet was a china cabinet, containing several fine pieces of china. The carpet was a cinnamon red color, and the exhibit was extremely pleasing, proving that here again is another center, alert, vigorous—manufacturing economic furniture of a high grade, at popular prices.

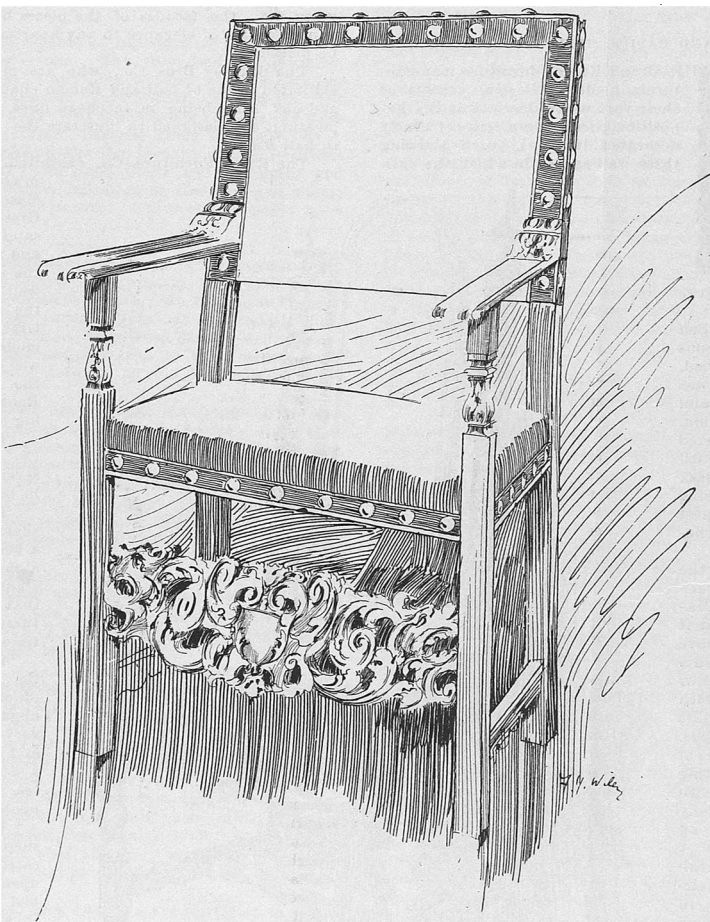
The Rockford Furniture Co. exhibited a Gothic hall, consisting of woodwork in the Gothic style, a Gothic staircase, a Gothic hall tree and seat. The hall tree and seat are by the Forest City Furniture Co., all constructed in oak.

CHICAGO, ILLS.

The Chicago furniture manufacturers were not behind those of Grand Rapids or Rockford in the magnitude or artistic merit of their productions.

Adams & Westlake showed a great many samples of their brass beds. One of these was their \$3,000 brass bed, in gold lacquer, with canopy top, draped with maroon silk, having tapestry panels at head and foot. They exhibited a splendid

silver plated bed, draped in blue, with painted tapestry panels. A decorated canopied brass bed, draped in old gold tapestry, was another magnificent illustration of the artistic merit of the goods produced by this firm. They also exhibited gold lacquered brass tables, with leaf of Mexican onyx, and Mexican onyx pedestals and piano lamps. Their entire display was shown in three different rooms, connecting with each other, the walls of the rooms being decorated with painted tapestries supplied by Mr. J. F. Douthitt, of 286 Fifth avenue, New York City. The exhibit as a whole was exceedingly attractive, and on Chicago day no less than 9,000 visitors passed through the rooms.



SPANISH CHAIR. DESIGNED BY F. J. WILEY.